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the library worker with a passionate zeal for research and great persistence in the prosecution of aims which lie somewhat outside the range of everyday routine; and (b) the library sufficiently catholic and far-sighted to realize the advantages of bibliographical thoroughness and specialization. One cannot lightly recommend to already overburdened librarians tasks which involve considerable time, nor is it practicable for the average library to grant its assistants unlimited leisure for research which may seem unproductive so far as the library itself is concerned. But I would call attention to the fact that in this country most of the bibliographical work in the field of horticulture is not being done by those specially trained for that kind of work, but by the scientists. Are we essentially incompetent to handle it, or is it not rather through sheer inadvertence that we have overlooked the opportunity? Do not misunderstand me if I say in this connection that there is danger of dwelling

too much on coöperation and too little on specialization; the former too often aims only at visible and tangible results, and necessarily fails to take into account individual adaptations for peculiar lines of work. Let us therefore encourage the spirit of personal research along bibliographical lines, endeavoring to direct it into channels of ultimate usefulness, and by coördinating the work of individuals, make it as generally available as possible. It should be evident that a large fund of special personal qualifications in various departments of science and literature is a rich asset in any library, while as for individual rewards, I am convinced that the literature of agriculture and horticulture offers to librarians and bibliographers opportunities for monuments of scholarship no less dignified, even if less conspicuous, than some of those which have already been established by fellow librarians in general literature and history or in other sciences.

LIBRARIES AND READING AS AN AID TO MORALE

By EDWARD L. MUNSON, *Colonel, General Staff, United States Army, Chief, Morale Branch*

Libraries and reading as an aid to the morale of troops have a value which the Morale Branch, on its organization, promptly recognized and set about to use as fully, systematically and efficiently as possible. Possessed, as it is, of intimate and accurate knowledge of the desires and needs of the soldier, it at once saw the

desirability of establishing as close a relation as practicable with the American Library Association, to the end that the latter might have all available information whereby it could function to full efficiency.

The Morale Branch believes that a proper library is far more than a mere collection of books. If suitably handled,

it is a powerful agency for the promotion and maintenance of good morale. For morale is a state of mind which has its expression in behavior, and anything which contributes to wholesome mental state is reflected in conduct.

The Morale Branch is essentially an agency of conservation and economy, for it capitalizes and turns to practical military account and purpose the desirable states of mind which are created practically as a "by-product" in the pursuit of aims in which morale does not directly appear but which are, to greater or less degree, likewise sources of contentment, interest, discipline, and high ideals. It has endeavored to turn the great contribution which the American Library Association has made in these respects to the service into terms of increased good order and military efficiency.

It has recognized the use of books by soldiers, not only as a valuable means of recreation and an essential agent in education and instruction, but as a ready channel for the conveyance of suggestion and thought for the betterment of character and behavior. The importance of this has more and more been recognized, for war is a clash of wills even more than one of arms. An act results only from sentiment, ideals and purpose. The Morale Branch has been interested accordingly, not only that libraries be available and be fully used, but that the selection of their literature be so judiciously made as to meet general and special needs and up-build morale and stabilize behavior by engendering wholesome states of mind.

The Morale Branch recognized the fact that literature arouses certain mental imagery which incites to action. Standards and ideals are presented which are more or less unconsciously adopted by the reader and serve as guides for later conduct. By suggestion, literature arouses the factor and instinct of imitation. It was therefore interested in having these standards high. Coöperation between the American Library Association and the Division of Military Intelligence insured that

the literature of the former would, in all cases, make for high ideals and beneficent results.

Contrary to the general idea, there is little idle time in the Army, as the millions of soldiers throughout the country will testify. The eight-hour day of the workingman finds no counterpart in any time limit in the service, for anything which has to be accomplished is done without regard to hours. But though the soldier's day is long, his work is systematized and accordingly there are brief intervals which may be snatched between exercises and duties; and, in common with other citizens, he has certain periods for rest, relaxation, and recreation, which he can call his own.

Men whose duties require much physical exercise tend to take their amusements and recreation quietly, and many after the work of the day have found pleasant and beneficial mental activity in the restful quiet of your libraries. At such times, the Morale Branch felt that they were in good hands and for the time being need receive no concern relative to thoughts or acts of indiscipline or disorder. Moreover, it felt that the lasting ideals conveyed by your books would help to relieve any apprehension for conduct in the future.

Many soldiers also were at times restricted by duties from participating in other forms of amusement. The man on guard or on special duty in barracks could not visit his friends, go to the show, or participate in the athletic contest. In such cases books were of particular value, for they were always available, could be picked up and read in the intervals of duty, serving to pass away time, otherwise idle, with profit as well as pleasure.

This also particularly applied to the sick in hospitals, whose infirmities largely curtailed participation in other pleasures, and whose surroundings were such that few other measures for promoting morale could be directly applied. The value of good books in meeting this particular situation can scarcely be over-estimated.

The printed word was accordingly es-

pecially available as a morale agency at times when other stimulants to morale had their functions in abeyance. It was a powerful agency, for there is such a popular respect for the printed word as to render the mind especially receptive to the ideas it conveys. To a certain class, seeing a thing in print is a guarantee of correctness, as an advertising expert will tell you. The old words, "it is written," are the finality in law and religion.

All this reading promoted contentment and bettered conduct through suggestion and environment. It opened up a new vista of opportunity to many, thereby bringing into play, as a constructive force for military efficiency, the factor of self-interest, which is one of the mainsprings of individual endeavor. It also at the same time stimulated and satisfied the natural instinct of curiosity, which is at the basis of all human progress.

The American Library Association was most generous to the Army in its provision of books of all sorts. In the six million books it supplied there was something for every man and every mood. The latter changed. While the war lasted, books relating to military methods and purposes were particularly called for; after the armistice, books on agriculture, trades, accounting, shorthand, business methods, philosophy, etc., became the popular ones.

The American Library Association, on suggestion of the Morale Branch, at this time added a suitable series of good books on civics, citizenship and the principles of good government, with the idea that if the soldier returning to civil life no longer need to die for his country, he should know how best to live for it. The use of these books was popularized in every possible way, and doubtless has had great stabilizing effect in these times of world unrest.

The Morale Branch was early faced with the problem of illiteracy, which existed on a scale previously unsuspected. The psychologists found that one soldier in every four could not take English literacy tests of an equivalent to the second grade, either

because of lack of education itself or through unfamiliarity with the English language. The channel for the creation of American and soldierly ideals through the printed word was thus closed to one-quarter of the Army.

Further investigations showed that the education of another twenty-five per cent was too limited to enable them to read high class literature with full understanding and profit. This was a most regrettable condition of affairs, for it was particularly the ignorant, illiterate and those of alien ideas who formed the weakest link in the morale chain and who most stood in need of the high purposes and ideals so well conveyed by literature.

The difficulty was at once reported to the American Library Association, and a vast amount of primers, readers, elementary textbooks, and simple literature was furnished by it to meet the needs of the schools and classes which were promptly started and promoted. Many men were given higher purposes and sounder ideas of American citizenship as a result of this most valuable and timely aid.

Libraries in civil life had largely catered to the educated and student class. Their assistance had to be sought out. But the Morale Branch felt that restriction of library function in the Army to one of dignified helpfulness would curtail its usefulness by at least a half as a result of the social, racial and literacy composition of the troops. Since the average soldier could not be expected to seek out the books voluntarily, the books must be brought to him—or at least their availability and value brought to his attention. Accordingly, with the full coöperation of the American Library Association and the effective morale organization in camps, a systematized campaign of library publicity was inaugurated. This included special posters, signboards, slides at moving picture shows, articles in camp papers, announcements of new books, systematic addresses to organizations by effective speakers, appeals to officers, publication of special lists of books especially suitable for reading by of-

ficers and enlisted men, lists of books supplementing special courses of study, etc. The use of book wagons was promoted, more branch libraries were established, book carts wheeled through the hospital wards, and nothing left undone which could bring about physical contact between the literature and the soldier and arouse the latter's interest therein.

As a result, there was a most satisfactory increase in the use of books, especially those of practical and industrial information and value. Some camps reported that even though their strength had greatly dwindled under demobilization the actual number of books loaned had greatly increased. On a percentage basis, it is quite possible that the advertising campaign made nearly two books blossom into use where only one had bloomed before.

This practical experience on a great scale in the Army may have in it the germ of a suggestion for the greater popularization and utilization of libraries in civil life. It would seem as if, especially at the present time, libraries rest under the patriotic obligation of using every possible measure to extend their facilities and good offices to that class of citizenry which, through illiteracy, inertia, and unfamiliarity with American language, customs and ideals have heretofore made little use of them. In addition to furnishing facilities, they might well charge themselves, as a function of at least equal practical importance,

with promoting a greater ability and desire in the public to make use of them. The problem includes not only the providing of books, but seeing that the latter are widely used, especially by that class which stands most in need of their sound suggestion and wise counsel. The traditionally dignified and reserved atmosphere characteristic of some civil libraries will not unduly suffer through the injection of business methods and aggressive publicity in reaching a wider clientele which will include the class more in need of good offices.

It is probable that every library has its untouched opportunities for good. Can they not be carefully sought out, classified, and the needs of the community, as developed, satisfied, better than is being done now? Never in its history has the world been in such a state of inquiry as at present. Never was there a greater demand and need for the dissemination of sound principles and ideas than exists today. Never have libraries had such a tremendous opportunity to render public service of far-reaching and immediate value. Will not the American Library Association repeat for the Nation itself, on a still larger scale and without delay, the wonderfully valuable constructive service which, as representative of the Morale Branch, I am here to testify it has performed for the Nation's Army?